

## *Strategic Goal: Expansion of Americans' Right to Know about their Environment*

Easy access to a wealth of information about the state of their local environment will expand citizen involvement and give people tools to protect their families and their communities as they see fit. Increased information exchange between scientists, public health officials, businesses, citizens, and all levels of government will foster greater knowledge about the environment and what can be done to protect it.

### BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Providing all Americans with access to sound environmental information and involving the public in our work are essential parts of a comprehensive approach to protecting the environment.

This goal is premised on the concept that all U.S. citizens have a right-to-know about the pollutants in their environment, including land, air and water pollution as well as potential health effects of the chemicals used in the food they consume and everyday products they purchase. This premise is especially important to minority, low-

income, and Native American communities that suffer a disproportionate share of health effects from poor environmental conditions.

Access to environmental information enables American citizens to make informed decisions about their local environment. It also leads to creative and sustainable solutions to environmental risks, as well as opportunities for preventing pollution. The Agency believes all U.S. citizens have the right to knowledge and representation in public policy and environmental decision-making.

### MEANS AND STRATEGY

The purpose of this goal is to empower the American public with information, enabling them to make informed decisions regarding environmental issues in their communities. EPA will expand environmental education, outreach and data availability. EPA will also expand the range of data it collects and improve the quality and usability of the data. The Agency will also ensure the data are widely available through the Internet, mass media and other sources.

The right-to-know is fundamental to EPA's mission and the effective management of our data is an important aspect of measuring our progress in protecting the American people and the environment

from toxic substances and pollution. The Agency has accelerated its efforts to improve the accuracy of its data, and to reduce the burdens to industry associated with reporting. Also the Agency is working to enhance the coordination of data collection activities with states and to improve our data collection methods and use the latest technologies to consolidate information on a single Internet site.

The Agency is working to redesign its internal structure to better meet the information demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. EPA's new vision and approach to information management will involve the creation of a single program manager and office responsible for

information management, policy and information technology stewardship across the Agency. This office would be responsible for developing and implementing information standards and accountability systems that will improve environmental information within the Agency and the information provided to the public. This office would oversee data collection, assure data quality, and make sure that data are appropriate for intended uses. The office would also work toward reducing information collection and reporting burden; filling significant data gaps; and providing integrated environmental and public health information and statistics to the public.

#### Research

The President's Environmental Monitoring for Public Access and Community Tracking (EMPACT) program will continue research to provide the public with information regarding local environmental conditions (e.g. toxic pollutants, water and air quality). EMPACT will provide at least 75 of the nation's largest metropolitan areas with access to information regarding the quality of their local environments, and relevant scientific and technical tools to interpret and evaluate potential impacts and risks to these environments. Citizen involvement in protecting the environment will also be expanded through the Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS). IRIS is a database of consensus health information on environmental contaminants and is used extensively by EPA Program Offices and Regions where consistent, reliable toxicity information is needed for credible risk assessments.

## EXTERNAL FACTORS

EPA relies heavily on partnerships with the states, tribes, local governments and regulated parties to protect the environment and human health.

EPA's success depends on the ability of these entities to access the decision-making process as it relates to their local environment. In addition, EPA relies upon information management reforms that are essential to the Agency's approach to environmental protection. Examples of management reforms designed to improve the availability of environmental performance data to the public include implementation of data standards for major systems and the subsequent information collection and data integration. Effective partnerships with states and industry are another essential factor in achieving this goal. The Agency is promoting advanced technology, including the Internet, to disseminate environmental information at the local level. New technology, emerging environmental problems or newly identified

priorities could affect the time frame for achieving the Goal 7 objectives.

Therefore, the ability of the Agency to achieve its strategic goal of expansion of Americans' Right-to-Know about their environment is influenced by several factors over which the Agency has only partial control. As such, success of these programs partially depends on the voluntary cooperation and collaboration between EPA and the private sector and the general public. The success of the Agency's Right-to-Know or public outreach efforts is ultimately determined by increased understanding by the public and their subsequent actions taken to improve their environment. We believe that with increased education, outreach and data availability, the public will be better able to participate in decisions that lead to solving the nation's environmental problems.

## *Resource Summary*

(Dollars in Thousands)

	<b>FY 1999 Enacted</b>	<b>FY 2000 Request</b>	<b>FY 2000 v. FY 1999 Enacted</b>
<b>Expansion of Americans' Right to Know About their Environment</b>	<b>\$133,467.2</b>	<b>\$144,599.1</b>	<b>\$11,131.9</b>
Increase Quality/Quantity of Education, Data Availability	\$67,818.5	\$77,487.5	\$9,669.0
Environmental Program and Management	\$65,865.6	\$75,118.8	\$9,253.2
Hazardous Substance Superfund	\$1,952.9	\$2,368.7	\$415.8
Improve Public's Ability to Reduce Exposure	\$42,247.7	\$41,230.8	(\$1,016.9)
Environmental Program and Management	\$42,247.7	\$41,230.8	(\$1,016.9)
Enhance Ability to Protect Public Health	\$23,401.0	\$25,880.8	\$2,479.8

Environmental Program and Management	\$11,640.6	\$12,751.9	\$1,111.3
Science and Technology	\$11,517.3	\$12,732.6	\$1,215.3
Hazardous Substance Superfund	\$243.1	\$396.3	\$153.20
Total Workyears:	720.8	754.3	33.5

## Strategic Objective: Increase Quality/Quantity of Education, Outreach, Data Availability

By 2005, EPA will improve the ability of the American public to participate in the protection of human health and the environment by increasing the quality and quantity of general environmental education, outreach and data availability programs, especially in disproportionately impacted and disadvantaged communities.

### *Key Programs*

(Dollars in thousands)

	<b>FY 1999 Enacted</b>	<b>FY 2000 Request</b>
EMPACT	\$1,202.3	\$3,573.5
Reinventing Environmental Information (REI)	\$12,547.8	\$15,731.8
Superfund - Maximize PRP Involvement (including reforms)	\$364.4	\$0.0
Environmental Education	\$7,767.6	\$8,426.1
GLOBE	\$0.0	\$1,000.0
SBREFA	\$760.3	\$777.3
Small Business Ombudsman	\$1,110.3	\$1,120.3
Center for Environmental Statistics (CEIS)	\$3,965.8	\$8,054.4
Information Technology Management	\$4,234.8	\$6,743.5

### *Annual Performance Goals and Measures*

#### **OUTREACH**

In 2000      Improve public access to compliance and enforcement documents and data, particularly to high risk communities, through multimedia data integration projects and other studies, analyses and communication/outreach activities.

<b>Performance Measures:</b>	<b>FY 1999</b>	<b>FY 2000</b>
Percent of OECA policy and guidance documents available through the Internet		90 percent
<b>Baseline:</b> The baseline for the public access goal comes from a variety of sources, including the website for Sector Facilities Indexing Project (SFIP) where FY99 was the first complete year of usage and the Integrated Data for Enforcement Analysis (IDEA) to which six (6) states have access in FY98.		

## ONE-STOP REPORTING

In 2000	The Agency will streamline and improve the information reporting process between state partners and EPA by increasing the number of state participants in the One Stop Reporting program from 29 to 38.	
In 1999	The Agency will streamline and improve the information reporting process between state partners and EPA by increasing the number of participants to the One-Stop Reporting Program (for a total of 29)	

<b>Performance Measures:</b>	<b>FY 1999</b>	<b>FY 2000</b>
Number of States participants in the One Stop Reporting Program.	29 States	38 States

**Baseline:** 29 state participants in 1999.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In 2000	Ensure that EPA's policies, programs and activities incl. public mtgs, address minority & low income comm. issues so that no segment of the pop. suffers disprop. from adverse health or env. effects, & that all people live in clean, healthy & sustainable comm. consistent w/ Executive Order 12898.	
In 1999	Provide over 100 grants to assist communities with understanding and addressing Environmental Justice issues.	

<b>Performance Measures:</b>	<b>FY 1999</b>	<b>FY 2000</b>
EJ Community Grants	100 Grants	
Number of EPA-sponsored public meetings held where disproportionately disadvantaged communities participate.		25 meetings
Increase number of states that have environmental justice programs.		12 states
Number of grants awarded to low income, minority communities for addressing environmental problems.		127 grants

**Baseline:** The percentage of enforcement policy & guidance documents that are available through the Internet is based on the number of completed documents in the given year. In 1998 there were 650 facilities in SFIP which have their information available through the SFIP web-site & in 2000 EPA projects a total of 1,300 facilities. These documents provide information to populations suffering disproportionately from adverse health & environmental effects. In 1999 each region will be required to report on the meetings held in disproportionately disadvantaged communities & this information will provide a baseline for future years.

## VERIFICATION AND VALIDATION OF PERFORMANCE MEASURES

While the planned performance measure for this objective is output-oriented, the availability of refinements to the Index of Watershed Indicators will provide the Agency and the public significant opportunities to better understand the extent of the health of the nation's ecosystems. The recently-revised strategic plan for the Index calls for several refinements that will enhance the value and validity of the system. Planned enhancements include: establishing expanded levels of peer review of Index protocols and data layers; comparing watershed-level information gathered through Unified Watershed Assessments, Clean Water Act 303(d) lists of impaired waters, and the Index; and, after extensive review by stakeholders, adding and refreshing data layers to provide a richer and more comprehensive assessment of watershed condition nationwide. This will enable the establishment of a firm analytical footing for measuring progress in the future.

Internal data link to information regarding Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests and controlled correspondence (FOIMATS), and Index of Watershed Indicators. Integrated Data for Enforcement Analysis (IDEA) provides on-line access to compliance and enforcement information

for most EPA national systems. The enforcement program's use of the data, for screening, analysis and regional evaluations, provides valuable feedback to help us identify and correct problems. Documents placed on the Internet must have management approval before public release. These document and data sources reside in EPA Headquarters and regional offices, compliance and enforcement databases, states and other government agencies. The measurement of progress made toward our targets can be verified at any point in time. Each of our targets for this goal is based upon a number of facilities, states, etc., which can be tallied at any point in time. This allows for ready tracking of our progress toward our final goals.

The data represented as part of the SFIP integration project went through numerous reviews by EPA, states and industry to capture the most current and complete data before being released to the public. SFIP is focused on five sectors. Therefore, while the data for these specific sectors is strong, it represents a small subset of our overall data.

Additionally, a list is maintained of state participants in the One Stop Reporting Program.

## *Statutory Authorities*

National Environmental Education Act

FMFIA

GPRA

Clinger-Cohen Act

Computer Security Act

Privacy Act

Electronic Freedom of Information Act.

Clean Air Act (CAA) (42 U.S.C. 7601-7671q)

Clean Water Act (CWA)(33 U.S.C. 1251- 1387)

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) (42 U.S.C. 9601-9675)

Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) section 313 (42 U.S.C. 110001-11050)

Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) (5 U.S.C. App.)

Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) (7 U.S.C. 136-136y)

Pollution Prevention Act (PPA) (42 U.S.C. 13101-13109)

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) (42 U.S.C. 6901-6992k)

Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) section 1445 (42 U.S.C. 300f-300j-26)

Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) section 14 (15 U.S.C. 2601-2692)

North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552)

Paperwork Reduction Act Amendment of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501-3520)

Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act (SBREFA)



Unfunded Mandates Reform Act

Congressional Review Act (CRA)

Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA)

Executive Order 12866

Plain Language Executive Order

## Strategic Objective: Improve Public's Ability to Reduce Exposure

By 2005, EPA will improve the ability of the public to reduce exposure to specific environmental and human health risks by making current, accurate substance-specific information widely and easily accessible.

### *Key Programs*

(Dollars in Thousands)

	<b>FY 1999 Enacted</b>	<b>FY 2000 Request</b>
Drinking Water Consumer Awareness	\$1,365.8	\$1,467.9
Pesticide Registration	\$5,214.2	\$4,454.1
Pesticide Reregistration	\$5,461.7	\$4,111.4
Toxic Release Inventory / Right-to-Know (RtK)	\$19,799.6	\$18,811.5
EMPACT	\$614.3	\$2,818.0
Reinventing Environmental Information (REI)	\$0.0	\$4,878.9

### *Annual Performance Goals and Measures*

#### **DRINKING WATER CONSUMER CONFIDENCE REPORTS**

In 2000	All community water systems will issue annual consumer confidence reports according to the rule promulgated in August 1998.
In 1999	EPA will partner with the states in implementation activities that will ensure all public water systems -- large, medium, and especially small -- are informed of both the requirements of the consumer confidence report regulation and implementation tools for complying with this rule.

#### **Performance Measures:**

	<b>FY 1999</b>	<b>FY 2000</b>
Community water systems that will comply with the regulation to publish consumer confidence reports	55,000 CWSs	

Number of states with which EPA has an agreement on the most efficient and effective methods (e.g., training, outreach) for implementing this rule in each state 50 States

Population served by CWSs that will comply with the regulation to publish consumer confidence reports. 249 Million People

## PROCESS AND DISSEMINATE TRI INFORMATION

In 2000 Process all submitted facility chemical release reports; publish annual summary of TRI data; provide improved information to the public about TRI chemicals; and maximize public access to TRI information.

In 1999 Process 110,000 facility chemical release reports, publish the TRI Data Release Report and provide improved information to the public about TRI chemicals, enhancing community right to know and efficiently processing information from industry.

### Performance Measures

### FY 1999

### FY 2000

TRI Public Data Release

1997 Report Published

Form R's Processed

110,000 Forms

110,000 Forms

Final 1998 TRIS database complete and report issued

02/29/2000 Published

**Baseline:** Number of facilities reporting and number of chemicals included in TRI compared with prior year; types of public access methods and % magnetic reporting prior year.

## VERIFICATION AND VALIDATION OF PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Verification and validation are important aspects of the right-to-know program. Most performance measures are verifiable through quantitative means. For those measures that are output-oriented, actual outputs or products are counted or otherwise objectively verified. For example, the Toxic Release Inventory System (TRIS) tracks progress in processing Form R's which are submitted each year. In other cases, verification and validation procedures are built into the data entry process both at the respondent level and when data are entered into the national TRIS database. Edit procedures internal to the reporting form help confirm whether data entered are

internally consistent. If this is not true, an error message is generated. Once data are entered into the national database, they are compared with those previously submitted to learn whether large increases or decreases at the largest TRI facilities have occurred. In cases where there are unusually large changes relative to previous reports submitted, facilities are contacted by staff members to verify the information. These and other similar data quality checks serve to verify and validate data that EPA collects and disseminates.

The TRI component of the right-to-know program generates data that inform citizens about

what occurs in their communities. Data collected and disseminated under TRI are used by a wide variety of parties, including other Federal agencies, state and local governments, environmental, labor and community groups, and academics. In order to facilitate appropriate usage of the data, EPA publishes various analyses as part of the annual data release.

Community water systems will be reporting their compliance with the Consumer Confidence Report rule through a newly developed component of the Safe Drinking Water Information System (SDWIS). The Agency maintains formal quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) procedures for both data entry and data retrieval in SDWIS.

The collection of performance data will involve a variety of methods, for example customer service surveys. Customer service surveys will be conducted annually to measure customer service satisfaction with management and administrative services. The results of the customer service survey will be used to validate performance measures. The approach to validate progress in reaching Agency performance targets will also rely on the Agency's automated performance measure system to capture programmatic and customer service outcomes. The system will require periodic updating of performance data. Performance information will be collected and evaluated against targets on a quarterly basis.

## STATUTORY AUTHORITIES

Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA)

Pollution Prevention Act (PPA)

Federal Fungicide, Insecticide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA)

Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA)

Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA)

Federal Managers Financial Integrity Act (FMFIA)

Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)

Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA)

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Computer Security Act

Privacy Act

Electronic Freedom of Information Act

## Strategic Objective: Enhance Ability to Protect Public Health

By 2005, EPA will meet or exceed the Agency's customer service standards in providing sound environmental information to federal, state, local, and tribal partners to enhance their ability to protect human health and the environment.

### *Key Programs*

(Dollars in Thousands)

	<b>FY 1999 Enacted</b>	<b>FY 2000 Request</b>
Urban Environmental Quality and Human Health	\$0.0	\$3,395.0
EMPACT	\$6,389.7	\$7,239.2
Small, Minority, Women-Owned Business Assistance	\$2,064.4	\$2,338.4

### *Annual Performance Goals and Measures*

#### Research

#### **EMPACT**

- In 2000      By FY 2000, 75% of EMPACT communities have in place, or have initiated, community-based strategies for time relevant environmental monitoring, information management and communication that will result in sustained community capacity to deliver timely environmental information.
- In 1999      By 1999, complete 5-7 monitoring pilot projects in EMPACT cities, implement timely and high quality environmental monitoring technology in 5-7 EMPACT cities.

#### **Performance Measures:**

Number of community-based strategies in place (i.e., number of pilots)

**FY 1999**

**FY 2000**

75% strategy

Award 5-7 grants to EMPACT cities to implement timely and high quality environmental monitoring technologies.

5-7 Grants

#### **Baseline:**

Perf. Baseline: Citizens in at least 75 of the USA's larger metropolitan areas are in need of access to clear, time-relevant, useful, and accurate environmental monitoring data in an ongoing and sustainable manner. Development of "formal" baseline information for EPA research is currently underway.

## VERIFICATION AND VALIDATION OF PERFORMANCE MEASURES

### Research

EPA has several strategies to validate and verify performance measures in the area of environmental science and technology research. Because the major output of research is technical information, primarily in the form of reports, software, protocols, etc., key to these strategies is the performance of both peer reviews and quality reviews to ensure that requirements are met.

Peer reviews provide assurance during the pre-planning, planning, and reporting of environmental science and research activities that the work meets peer expectations. Only those science activities that pass agency peer review are addressed. This applies to program-level, project-level, and research outputs. The quality of the peer review activity is monitored by EPA to ensure that peer reviews are performed consistently, according to Agency policy, and that any identified areas of concern are resolved through discussion or the implementation of corrective action.

The Agency's expanded focus on peer review helps ensure that the performance measures listed here are verified and validated by an external organization. This is accomplished through the use of the Science Advisory Board (SAB) and the Board of Scientific Counselors (BOSC). The BOSC, established under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, provides an added measure of assurance by examining the way the Agency uses peer review, as well as the management of its research and development laboratories.

In 1998, the Agency presented a new Agency-wide quality system in Agency Order 5360.1/chg 1. This system provided policy to ensure that all environmental programs performed by or for the Agency be supported by individual quality systems that comply fully with the American

National Standard, *Specifications and Guidelines for Quality Systems for Environmental Data Collection and Environmental Technology Programs* (ANSI/ASQC E4-1994).

The order expanded the applicability of quality assurance and quality control to the design, construction, and operation by EPA organizations of environmental technology such as pollution control and abatement systems; treatment, storage, and disposal systems; and remediation systems. This rededication to quality provides the needed management and technical practices to assure that environmental data developed in research and used to support Agency decisions are of adequate quality and usability for their intended purpose.

A quality assurance system is implemented at all levels in the EPA research organization. The Agency-wide quality assurance system is a management system that provides the necessary elements to plan, implement, document, and assess the effectiveness of quality assurance and quality control activities applied to environmental programs conducted by or for EPA. This quality management system provides for identification of environmental programs for which QA/QC is needed, specification of the quality of the data required from environmental programs, and provision of sufficient resources to assure that an adequate level of QA/QC is performed.

Agency measurements are based on the application of standard EPA and ASTM methodology as well as performance-based measurement systems. Non-standard methods are validated at the project level. Internal and external management system assessments report the efficacy of the management system for quality of the data and the final research results. The quality assurance annual report and work plan submitted by each organizational unit provides an accountable

mechanism for quality activities. Continuous improvement in the quality system is

accomplished through discussion and review of assessment results.

## STATUTORY AUTHORITIES

Federal Advisory Committee Act

Comprehensive Environmental Response,  
Compensation, and Liability Act

### Research

Clean Air Act (CAA) and amendments

Clean Water Act (CWA) and amendments

Environmental Research, Development, and  
Demonstration Act (ERDDA) of 1981

Toxic Substance Control Act (TSCA)

Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide  
Act (FIFRA)

Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA)

Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) and  
amendments

Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA)

CPRKA of 1986

CERCLA

SARA